



# THE CITY AND THE STORE





UPPER FALSE CREEK FLATS

WOODWARDS 1892


BURRARD

VANCOUVE









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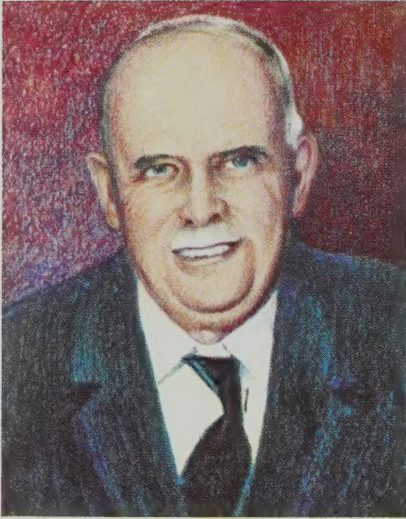
# THE CITY AND THE STORE

While the province of British Columbia was still young, she gave birth to two lusty children—Vancouver, the village that became a great City, and Woodward's, the Store that has become an institution. Their birthdates are within a few years. Their stories have followed a remarkably parallel course. This book is an attempt to depict the principal events in their astounding growth.









Charles Woodward

## A SMALL BEGINNING—1891-1918

When Charles Woodward came to Vancouver in 1891 he was a shrewd, energetic man in the prime of life. He had been the proprietor of several successful stores in Ontario, but the last of these at Thessalon had been gutted by fire, destroying every financial asset he had except the contents of the safe. He had heard stories of the promise of the West and decided to move to British Columbia.

He was at first, by his own admission, prejudiced against Vancouver. He felt that it might be just a C.P.R. boom town and that New Westminster, with its good agricultural land, long navigable river and consequently cheap transportation to markets, would be the better prospect. So he looked around, journeying to Calgary, Kamloops, Victoria and New Westminster as well.

He might well be sceptical. Vancouver then a town of 13,000 had recently been burned to the ground. Only five years previously every building had been razed. Now that it was beginning to rise from the ashes it was encountering hostility on every side—from the citizens of Victoria, who threatened to boycott Eastern merchants if they appointed agents elsewhere in B.C., and who spread the story that the port itself was unsafe for shipping; and



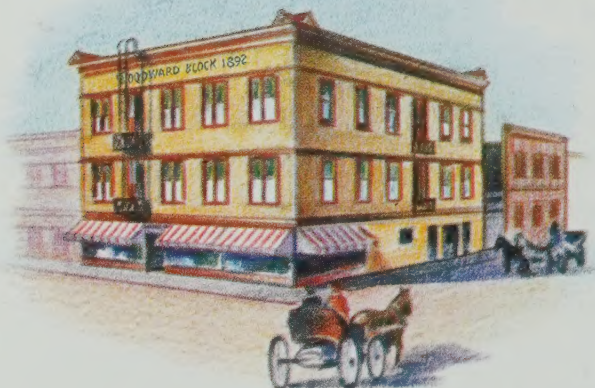
from Port Moody which had tried by every possible means to prevent the C.P.R. carrying through to Vancouver.

Even the name Vancouver was disliked as being possibly prejudicial to the prosperity of Vancouver Island; there were still people who called the young city Granville or Gastown.

Admittedly it boasted a fine new Opera House (now the International Cinema on Granville St.) seating 1600 people and constructed by the C.P.R., according to the Vancouver 'World' of the day, "regardless of cost and in the most approved manner". Nevertheless, only one year before, it had acquired its first railway system and its first electric light service. There was little to suggest stability. It might easily go the way of the ghost towns to be found in other parts of B.C.

However, a careful study of the various places led him to the conclusion that Vancouver was the town of the future, so he purchased the option on two lots at the corner of Harris Street and Westminster Avenue, (Main and Georgia Streets) built a three-story business building 55 x 70 ft., and opened it in the Spring of 1892. It was not an easy matter financing this, but his credit was good, his hopes high and his courage abundant.

Westminster Avenue was then a macadam road with a single-track street-car line. It was the main thoroughfare to Westminster and built up for at least a half-mile around his Store. A half-block away over a small shop was the First Baptist Church with Vancouver's first Salvation Army Hut next to it. A little way up the street could be seen the tower of the market-hall, and just beyond it, the tall trees and thick brush that bordered the road to the Royal City.



Woodward's original store at Harris Street and Westminster Avenue in 1892, now Main and Georgia.





View of Vancouver from Mount Pleasant, 1890.

Nearby on the northeast corner of Gore Avenue stood St. James', Vancouver's first Anglican Church. Indeed, it had been built by the City's earliest pioneers in a clearing in the forest (now Main Street), had been destroyed in the Fire, and re-built in 1887 on two acres of ground purchased for \$450.00.

If you looked south along Main Street you saw instead of today's imposing C.N.R. Depot, a long narrow wooden bridge. This was over False Creek, long since filled in, but not so many years before, there was no bridge, and horses had to swim to the logging camp at the head of it. All around were the mud flats where the children played after school. On <sup>Mount</sup> Mt. Pleasant, east of Westminster Avenue, were creeks where they went to spear salmon. Grass grew where the Public Library and the old City Hall were to be built a few years later.

The passing of a streetcar was an infrequent event, for this was still the era of carts, carriages and gigs. There was a big livery stable up the street. Palmer's Hay and Feed Store did a thriving business. Woodward Stores delivered merchandise first by hand-cart, later by horse and wagon. The Store was a frame building with a good-sized vegetable garden at the back, faithfully watered every night by the owner.

The principal merchandise on the counters was piece goods, since most people made their own curtains and clothes. There were at this time only three departments—Boots and Shoes, Piece Goods, and Men's Clothing.



An innovation came in 1896 when a Drug Department was added. The stock and equipment of a druggist who had gone out of business were bought up for very little money. This Drug Department was operated by John Woodward, eldest son of the founder, and marks an important chapter in our story. There had always been a close monopoly in the drug business. Drugs were merchandised at fantastic profits. This did not fit in with Woodward's policy of selling for less, so the battle began. Woodward's started to sell drug sundries and patent medicines at lower than maintained prices. The manufacturers complained, threatened, and finally boycotted this unruly firm: "No supplies for Woodward's," they said, and meant it.

This famous battle continued for many years. It was a point of tremendous importance to Woodward's. Their main basic policy was, and still is, to merchandise as efficiently as possible and pass the savings on to the public. Business interests they believe are best served by considering first and foremost the interests of their customers. How could they do this if they were forced to sell at exorbitant prices? So the battle was waged with unwavering determination.

Meanwhile the City grew. Perhaps it was the Klondike Gold Rush which brought to Vancouver the realization of its destiny. The prospects of distant trading became apparent, merchants grew alive to the opportunities that beset them. The stampede to the Klondike led to Vancouver receiving all Yukon trade. The City grew, not only in buildings and in industry, but in stature. There came a demand for equal treatment in respect to freight rates, a claim which has only recently been won. There came Vancouver's participation in the South African War. There came a visit from King George V and Queen Mary, then the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall.



One of Woodward's fleet of 12 delivery wagons, 1913.





Hastings Street during World War I



Woodward's prosperity grew with the City. In 1904 they decided to move. The time had come for expansion. They decided to avoid Cordova Street which was too fashionable and expensive. It had always been the principal street of Vancouver, and the rents were fabulous. Moreover it was felt that the City's trend would eventually be away from the water-front.

The streets adjoining Hastings were beginning to be well built-up now. This seemed the natural site for future growth, though Hastings itself was undeveloped and the site on which our Store stands was a swamp eight feet below the elevation of the sidewalk, full of bull-frogs and luxuriant skunk cabbage.

In the 12 or 13 years they had been in business a good name and a good record for honest and conscientious service had been built. It had not brought in a great deal of profit but there was abundant good will. They had no difficulty in finding partners to support the venture.

Hard by the pond where they decided to erect their building were a few small stores, well remembered by our pioneers. There was Thurston, the shoe store; Johnson & Kerfoot, men's furnishings; a lithographing shop; Fred Ackers who kept his tobacco store and shoe-shine counter where our Hardware Department is today, with the Vancouver Reading Room upstairs; Shafer's Cafeteria, the first in British Columbia and perhaps the first in Canada, where the present Drug Department is. When Shafer called it a "cafeteria" no-one knew what the word meant and most of his first customers came out of curiosity.

Vancouver began to grow by leaps and bounds. There was a boom in real estate. The Panama Canal was finished, shortening by thousands of miles the trade routes between Vancouver and Europe. By 1912 there were 100,000 residents in the City.

The world-wide depression of 1913 did not miss Vancouver. Indeed it was an almost inevitable aftermath to a period of phenomenal inflation.

Times were hard that year and every bit of business strenuously fought for. The staff checked in at 7:30. The Store opened at 8:00 a.m. and stayed open until 6:00 p.m.; on a Saturday or a day before a holiday, it did not close until 11, or even 11:30, if there were any customers. All this diligence paid dividends, for Woodward's stayed above water while many other stores went under.





Old Hotel Vancouver, Granville and Georgia Streets

The number of delivery wagons grew to twelve, and a new stable was built for the horses at the corner of Hamilton Street. Hitherto they had been kept in the alley behind the Travellers' Hotel. Early in 1914 there was even a small addition to the main building on Hastings and Abbott.

Just as business in Vancouver was beginning to climb out of the doldrums, the First World War burst upon the world. To the world of 1914, total war was something new. Some remembered the South African Campaign and other similar skirmishes involving small professional armies and barely



touching the life and the economy of the nation. But the implications of the First World War at first were hard to assess. The immediate reaction was that it must be over in two or three months. "There was not enough money in the whole world to protract it longer," said the economists.

All the eligible young men flocked to the colours convinced that if they did not get to the front in a month they would never see action. There were bands and glamour and marching, and many who thought it was all rather a lark. Only after the gas attack at St. Julien in 1915 and the first real wave of Canadian casualties, did people realize what was happening, and the temper of Canada was stirred.

Meanwhile business tried to go on as usual. Throughout the war years there was little development in the City except in business directly connected with the war. Alfred Wallace's Shipyard, over on the North Shore, built and outfitted six auxiliary powered schooners, known as the "Mabel Brown" type, and a number of steel freighters. The machine shops drew off an army of workers. But it was tough going for the others. Vancouver was so far from the war and there was no civilian overseas shipping at all. These were the only years on record when the sound of hammer and drill was absent from the Store.

At last, to a weary world in November 1918, came the end of the war that was only to have lasted three months. In Victory Square, where little more than 30 years before dense fir forests had been cut down by the pioneers to make the old Vancouver Courthouse, a cenotaph was built to do honour to the memory of 62,000 Canadians who had given their lives.

The spirits of free people all over the world soared. Business boomed. Vancouver, destined by nature and geography to be a great City, resumed its strenuous growth.



Cenotaph, Victory Square, in memory of those who gave their lives in the World War, 1914-1918.





P. A. Woodward

## BETWEEN THE WARS

The fortunes of the Store and the fortunes of Vancouver have always followed a parallel course and 1919, a year of prosperity, was no exception. This was the year in which Woodward Stores suddenly became an institution.

One important contributing factor was the beginning of self-service. In the post-war years operating costs, service and delivery, not only mounted but sky-rocketed. Why should not customers be encouraged to serve themselves and save? Some of the directors were sceptical. Interested, helpful service had always been one of the basic qualities in which the Store believed and which had been so responsible for the success of the business. Self-Service seemed to aim a shattering blow at this philosophy. However, the inflationary spirals which followed the end of the First World War showed no signs of abating. It was realized that something must be done to cut down the price of foods and to enable them to sell the necessities of life for less. The idea, inaugurated by Mr. P. A. Woodward, was an immediate success and Woodward's Self-Service Food Floor became the largest under one roof in the world and is the envy and study of food merchandisers everywhere.

It was in this year, too, that Woodward's famous "95c Day" was started. This became known all over the North American Continent. The big day was preceded with a one-page advertisement, set out in tiny print and doing no more than listing values offered, in splendid defiance of high pressure



tactics. The whole secret of 95c Day lay in values which were not only honestly represented, but really worth pursuing.

The management believed that it was neither good ethics nor good sense to try to fool the public. Give them the best in values, and you could win and hold their loyalty, however bad the times were. These one-price days were discontinued in 1941 owing to shortage of merchandise. When they were resumed after the Second World War, it was evident that Vancouver people had not forgotten them. As \$1.49 Days, they soon became as popular as ever.

The year 1926 was a fantastic one in Vancouver. The speculative movement changed from real estate to stocks and bonds. Wild financial adventuring, which was to end in panic and collapse three years later, was rampant. The prosperity of the City can be seen from this one statistic; bank clearings which in 1892 had totalled \$8 million in 1926 exceeded \$888 millions.

This was the year in which the Edmonton Store was built. Three years before, when the property had been bought, Edmonton was a town of 60,000 people. There was little to indicate that it would become one of the most prosperous cities in Canada by 1958. The site was in an area which was then quite remote, but has subsequently become the centre of the town. Here was erected the first edition of the large modern Store that stands today at the corner of 101st Street and 102nd Avenue.

Certain basic policies of the firm now began to make themselves manifest.

One was the declaration against the use of comparative prices in their advertising. Woodward's believed that goods were worth only what you sold them for. They thought that a statement to the effect that a store was now selling for \$1.00 what it usually sold for \$3.00 was irrelevant and often fictitious. To this day there is a ban on such practices throughout the organization.

In Vancouver during 1927 and 1928, and in the early months of 1929, the boom continued. The City expanded and the municipalities of Point Grey and South Vancouver were amalgamated into it. A road was built up Grouse Mountain with a Chalet at the top of it, by means of which one of the most impressive views in the world was now brought within easy reach and attracted thousands of tourists. The Second Narrows Bridge was built over to the North Shore. An air base at Sea Island was commenced and later





New City Hall, 12th and Cambie Street

became the Vancouver International Airport, the busiest in Canada. Woodward Stores added a 7th storey to its building. There had been five million customer transactions during 1924; in 1928 that number had grown to more than nine million. Even this gigantic total was to be more than doubled.

When in 1929 came the crash which brought financial disaster to countless homes and businesses all over the country, Woodward's not only weathered the storm but found that the principles and policies on which it had been founded were practically depression-proof. Continuous warfare waged against non-productive frills and needless waste enabled Woodward's to sell for less. So it was that when the crash came the Store survived and flourished.

In 1930, when business throughout the City was still shattered and shaken by the appalling ravages of the preceding year, a large garage was built for customers' cars. This was a bold move. Today in Vancouver there are about 137,000 motor vehicle registrations, but at that time there were less than one quarter of that number. Here indeed was tangible evidence of the Woodward conviction that, depression or no depression, Vancouver was





Canadian corvettes on convoy duty, World War II

destined to be one of the major cities of the West. This garage with its tunnels underneath the street connecting it with the main Store, was the first of its kind not only in Vancouver but in any department store in Canada. For many years it proved a great asset until, in 1957, the management felt the Store had outgrown it and replaced it.

Slowly, but inevitably, Vancouver began to climb out of the depression. When its Golden Jubilee was celebrated in 1936, things were back to normal, though the errors of mistaking inflation for wealth remained green in many memories.

The late G.G. McGeer, K.C., then Mayor of Vancouver, led the City in a building programme which resulted in the finest City Hall in Canada, costing a million dollars and financed largely by baby bonds. This unique form of financing resulted in most of the project being paid for within ten years.

When Charles Woodward died at the age of 85 in June 1937, he was still "in harness". He had retired in 1912, and had moved to California, but orange and nut-groves and the life of leisure were not for him, and he never really broke his ties with the Store.

He had built well and soundly, with courage and vision. His principles of conservatism, not too cheap, not too expensive, and of respect for the customer, are still basic Store policies.



He was one of the pioneer builders of the City, too, having served as member of the Liberal Party in the Provincial Legislature under Premier J. D. MacLean; as M.L.A.; as the persistent champion of Mount Pleasant, the neighbourhood of his earlier days, and as one of the earliest boosters for the P.G.E. railway.

His motto had been "Advance Vancouver", and he had lived up to it.

The next two years were important both for the City and for the Store. In 1939 the King and Queen visited Vancouver and stayed in the new Vancouver Hotel, which had just been opened jointly by the C.P.R. and the C.N.R., and which is probably the finest in Canada. The old hotel stood like a symbol of the past. Once it marked the ultimate in grandeur. It was torn down after the war because Vancouver had outgrown it.

During these years under their new president, W. C. Woodward, the Store was increased to eight floors and the Lower Main and sub-basement extended to Cordova Street. In addition, a staff lunchroom, where upwards of 4,000 meals are served daily at cost price was opened.

Then once again the building programme was abruptly halted by the advent of the Second World War. Again there were severe building restrictions. It was to be nearly nine years before the expanding Woodward organization would be able to add to its chain. The staff was speedily depleted of young men. The people girded themselves for what they felt must be a long war.

Almost immediately the new President was again called away to the service of his country.

One of Canada's major roles was to supply the "sinews of war". To meet the tremendous demands made upon it, the Government decided to create a new department, the Department of Munitions and Supply. The Hon. C. D. Howe was placed in charge of it.

Canada, emerging from a period of depression and with comparatively little industrial development, faced a great challenge. Mr. Howe called for four outstanding Canadians to work with him. Mr. Woodward was one. The prodigious success of their work is a matter of history.

His Second World War effort almost cost him his life. In December 1940, whilst on a mission to England, his ship, the British ~~tramp steamer~~ <sup>armed passenger ship</sup> "Western Prince" was torpedoed about 400 miles northwest of the Irish coast. It was



three days before Vancouver learned that he was safe, and many tales were told of his courage and thoughtfulness in that time of peril.

Another contribution made to the war was the inauguration of Overseas Parcels. Woodward's had the honour of being the originator of the Mail Order Food Parcels. As early as October 1939, the suggestion was made that there would be in Great Britain "a shortage of certain luxury food lines", and that these might be provided by mail from Canada since parcels could still be sent, weighing up to 20 pounds.

As the war dragged on and the anticipated shortage of certain food lines became a desperate need of basic necessities, so did the idea of food parcels grow. Orders flocked in for them to be sent to England from all parts of the United States, and every province of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Islands. In October 1940 alone, 50,000 parcels were despatched from Woodward's. All through the fall season of 1941 when Britain gallantly waged war alone on behalf of civilization, all food parcels were supplied by the firm at cost.

Vancouver's status during the Second World War was, of course, immeasurably greater. The City, for the first time in Canadian history, became headquarters for Pacific Command embracing all army establishments in British Columbia and the Yukon. The Burrard dry dock built and outfitted 109 wartime cargo vessels—more than a third of Canada's 10,000 tonners. Vancouver's own regiments were at once mobilized. Before Christmas 1939, the Seaforth Highlanders had landed in England. The D.C.O.R. became a tank regiment and fought as the 28th Armoured Regiment in France, Belgium and Holland. The Irish Fusiliers, 6th Field Company R.C.E., 15th B.C. Coast Artillery Regiment, all played their loyal and gallant part.

Woodward Stores were faced once again with a long period of restrictions and shortages. Every possible support was given to the war effort. Servicemen were entertained every month at dances and parties held in the Auditorium. The Store was used for promoting Victory Loans, A.R.P., Red Cross drives and even military training.



One of the modern, ten-ton trailers used to haul merchandise from the warehouse to the lower mainland stores.





Hon. W. C. Woodward

## TEN TREMENDOUS YEARS, 1946-1956

At last came the end of the Second World War. Former staff who had been stockroom boys and girls when they enlisted, came back as men and women, matured and seasoned by their experiences. Back they came from every branch of the armed and of the women's services. They seemed to bring with them a sense of responsibility which suggested that their war years had not been barren ones. They remembered the parcels and cigarettes the Company had sent them. They remembered that their families had continued to enjoy employee discount privileges while they were in the forces. When they returned, the Company gave them back their former jobs, and in many cases better jobs, with all the increases their fellow employees enjoyed in their absence.

The Store itself was ready for action. There had been no expansion since 1939.

The heavy diet of restrictions on which the people of Canada had been fed all through the war years had prevented that. Now, however, the management was bristling with plans.

In November 1947, the first section of a new \$800,000 addition was opened. This included an addition to the main Store of 132,000 square feet, a new 10-storey section and the completion of the 7th and 8th floors. The





Woodward's Store after alterations, 1947

Bakery added ovens which could produce 25,000 loaves of bread a day. The new coffee roaster could handle five hundred pounds of coffee per hour. There were new freight elevators with two-ton capacity and speed 100 feet a minute, new passenger elevators. The narrow-fronted, 4-storey structure of 1904 was almost unrecognizable.

Now, plans for expanding into other districts could be put into effect. On Monday, March 1st, 1948, a Woodward Store was opened in Port Alberni, Vancouver Island. On a large site at Third Avenue and Mar Street, a suitable building was erected and brought to the people of this growing town, the same shopping advantages as Woodward customers enjoyed in the big metropolis.

The Store management had long wished to modernize its delivery methods and had for some years been studying this complex problem. In 1949 a Service Building was erected over two acres of ground on the Grandview



Highway at Renfrew Street. Part of the building was to be a Warehouse, part of it a delivery centre through which all items for delivery would be cleared.

A high-speed delivery system was designed to make the best possible use of the fleet of 105 trucks, and to handle a substantially increased number of deliveries smoothly and competently. Each day fourteen 10-ton trailers haul merchandise from the Warehouse to the three lower mainland Stores, and then return loaded with deliveries. The Grandview Service Building now covers more than ten acres, contains thousands of yards of endless belt conveyor. The Woodward trucks travel a million miles a year.

After the Second World War, Woodward's also decided to organize buying agencies abroad. In 1946 the London office was opened—a one-room affair in a building at 35 Milk Street which held the offices of their shipping agents, Thomas Meadows & Sons, as well. Since then it has moved three times to bigger and better quarters, and is now very well housed at 54-62 Regent Street, W.I.

In 1950, Col. and Mrs. Woodward and two directors made an extensive tour in Europe and appointed agencies in Belgium, Austria, Switzerland, France, Spain, Holland, Germany, Italy and Scandinavia. Two years later they made a tour around the world and made appointments in Siam, Japan, Turkey, India, Malaya, Pakistan and Hong Kong.

Woodward buyers are frequently in the markets of the world visiting eastern Canada, eastern United States, and California as well as making annual journeys to the European and Oriental markets.

Meanwhile, the Company's belief that its own success must be measured first and foremost in terms of its employees' happiness was abundantly evidenced. Everything that could be done for their welfare and security was done.



Woodward's buyers travel thousands of miles each year to the markets of the world.





The Woodward organization is closely knit. Almost every one of the present directors came up through the ranks, served a long apprenticeship, has been with the firm for 20 years or more. From the President downwards each keeps his door open and is accessible to his staff and to his customers. Each knows from personal experience what makes for job happiness for Store workers at every level.

To the many benefits already existing, a retirement plan has been added.

At present there are approximately one hundred and fifty pensioners enjoying the benefits of this plan. These are some of the people who have contributed over the years to the success of the Company.

A Sick Pay Plan supplemented the Sick Benefit Society and provided additional funds for staff prevented from coming to work by illness.

A Staff Advisory Council was initiated to provide a channel for suggestion and constructive criticism. This committee, which is composed of one elected member from each department, meets at least once a month.

This genuine interest by the management in employee welfare has bred a singular loyalty. If there has been one factor more responsible than any other for the success of the Woodward organization, it has been to have so many dedicated staff members. One night last year, 155 of them dined together. There were directors, stenographers, warehousemen, vice-presidents, salesladies. One thing they had in common—each had been at Woodward's for 20 years or more. Indeed, four people sitting together at one table totalled 167 years of service, whilst the aggregate years were 4,105. Such a group as this, who have spent practically all their working days together in the same firm, have a staunch support and enthusiasm which are not easily matched.

In May 1950, an important event in the history of West Vancouver took place.

A fine shopping centre was opened at the corner of Taylor Way and Marine Drive, and provided 11 acres of stores for the 44,000 (now 70,000!) residents of the North Shore.

Here was a plan that really appealed to the Woodward spirit of enterprise, a site on which a large modern department Store and super-market were erected. The new Store was of reinforced concrete and took up 46,500



square feet all on one floor, with a large Food Floor adjoining. Furniture and Carpet Departments were housed separately at the west end of the centre.

The closer linking of the mainland and the North Shore had long been one of the founder's favourite projects. In the early days of the Store the only means of transportation had been by rowboat. In 1911 had come the North Vancouver ferry, the first all-steel vessel of any size constructed on the B.C. coast. Sixteen years later the building of the Second Narrows Bridge, bringing road and rail service to the communities on the North Shore marked the fulfilment of a dream long cherished. We wish Charles Woodward could have seen the Lions Gate Bridge, financed by Guinness capital, provide in 1938 the longest single suspension bridge in the British Empire, and the logical culmination of his vision—Woodward Stores, Park Royal.

"We have," said the Hon. W. C. Woodward, in introducing it to the public, "the most modern centre in Canada, but this is no millionaires' shopping district. We shall be offering the same goods as we do in our other Stores."

In less than twelve months it was necessary to add a complete second storey.

Three additional Stores followed in rapid succession. The fifth of the chain was opened one block from the Empress Hotel, Victoria, at Douglas and Courtenay Streets, on June 29th, 1951. This had a frontage of only 150 feet and was to be a modern Store of specialized departments preparing the way for the department Store which the Company plans to build some day in the capital city. But it soon had distinguished customers. When Princess Elizabeth and Prince Philip visited British Columbia three months later and stayed at Government House with Lieutenant-Governor and Mrs. Wallace, they needed a radio powerful enough to get the B.B.C. which Woodward's had the honour of supplying.

Two years later the young Princess who made such a deep impression during her visit to Vancouver was crowned Queen, and for the first time

MAJESTY  
Coronation of Her Royal Highness, Queen Elizabeth II, June 2nd, 1953.





in history the Coronation ceremonies were televised and broadcast. At the Store, television sets were much in demand.

Coronation year was also marked by the coming of Profit Sharing.

One of the basic Woodward policies has always been to devise measures by which the staff could share in the firm's success. For many years this was accomplished by means of a stock purchase plan. No share issue was available to the general public. The only shareholders were staff members. Now with such a greatly increased staff, there were not enough shares to go round. So the management cast about for other means of maintaining their policy of staff participation.

In 1953 they came up with a most satisfactory answer—Profit Sharing. It was decided that each year a certain percentage of the company's earnings would be credited to each staff member in a special trust fund. The fund was to be invested in Woodward securities and other profitable ventures in order to earn extra income. It was intended to provide a nest-egg for any member of the staff leaving the Store.

At least two previous years had been spent exploring every angle of Profit Sharing, and representatives of the Company examined many schemes before the final draft was made. It was decided that each employee's share of the amount to be divided would depend on the wages they earned and the years of service given to the Store. Participants were also given an opportunity of investing their own money in the plan. Members of the Staff Advisory Council worked with the management in setting it up, and Woodward's Profit Sharing and Savings Fund Plan has become a most valuable and important Store benefit. For 1956 the firm donated \$400,000, twice its original contribution.

Meanwhile the Canadian boom showed no signs of abating. In 1953 a five-year civic improvement programme was authorized by Vancouver's rate-payers who voted an expenditure of \$48 million. Even this gigantic sum was to be dwarfed by the second five-year plan when \$72 million was voted.

The last of the old streetcars left the City streets. The conversion from rails to rubber was complete, as befitted a large modern metropolis.

1954 was another notable year. During the summer Vancouver was host to athletes from all over the world at the British Empire Games. Woodward's



entered enthusiastically into the celebrations for this tremendous event, and Store life was enlivened by visits from foreign representatives who had come to compete. These events culminated in the famous Miracle Mile, when the mile race was run in less than 4 minutes by two competitors, Dr. Roger Bannister and John Landy.

A few days before the commencement of the Games the new Granville Street Bridge, started in 1951, was officially opened.

This was also the year in which the sixth Store of the chain was opened in New Westminster at the corner of 6th Avenue and 6th Street. Old-timers remember it as the same corner where Bussey's Grocery had stood forty years before.

The new Store was by far the most modern of all. It had a complete escalator service, a parcel pick-up station, a public address system. Customers enjoyed the novelty of driving their cars up a 20 ft. wide gradually graded ramp from the parking lot at the rear of the Store to a parking area on the roof, where 300 cars or more could be accommodated. They also enjoyed the electric eye exit doors, and the electric check-outs. The New Westminster Store had a larger main floor area than the Vancouver Store. It was finished in red brick. A central pylon at the front of the Store fashioned in stone carried the illuminated name. The New Westminster Store opened its doors to the public in March 1954, before one of the largest crowds ever witnessed in the Royal City.

The following year the Directors' interest switched back to Edmonton, and the event of the year was the opening of the Westmount Shopping Centre in West Edmonton, three miles from the main Store. Within two months the bridge across the Saskatchewan River was completed, thus making Westmount the closest shopping headquarters for the large and growing population on the south side of the city.



Dr. Roger Bannister running The Miracle Mile at British Empire Games, Empire Stadium, Vancouver, 1954.



Woodward's seventh Store became the central feature of Westmount. Its three buildings—a two-storey Department Store, a Food Floor, and a Furniture Store—were again in red Roman brick. All the modern features of the Westminster Store were included and brought to a still greater pitch of perfection.

This year also marked the retirement of P. A. Woodward, fourth son of the founder. He had served the Store all his working life in many capacities, including Merchandising Manager and General Manager. In most of the basic Woodward policies he played a leading part. The Self-Service Groceteria and the Store's refusal to make use of comparative prices in its advertising are directly due to the influence of this top rank executive.

Sports history was made again when the Grey Cup Contest was held in Vancouver for the first time. The Edmonton Eskimos defeated the Montreal Alouettes in a historic battle on November 26, 1955. British Columbia joined the league for the first time with its own team, the B.C. Lions. Woodward's had the privilege of operating the Quarterback Club in which some 8,000 boys and girls enrolled and were given special admission prices.

The City of Vancouver continued to grow, and its skyline became heavy

with skyscrapers. In April, 1955, a nine-storey Customs Building was opened on Pender Street and the Burrard Office Building towered twenty storeys high where Oscar's Steak House used to stand. The B.C. Electric Building, larger still, cost \$6,500,000 and made architectural history.



New B.C. Electric Building





C. N. Woodward

## A NEW ERA

In 1957, Hon. W. C. Woodward, President of the firm, died suddenly. For more than 50 years he had served the Company and watched it grow from a modest three-storey building. No single man played a larger part in its expansion.

He had also been in the spotlight of public service for many years. He was a former President of the Board of Trade, a Director of the Bank of Canada and of the Royal Bank, an executive of many companies and welfare organizations. He had served with distinction in two World Wars. In September, 1941, he became Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia, and held this office for five strenuous years.

The Freedom of the City of Vancouver was conferred on him, he was Honorary Colonel-at-Large in the Canadian Militia, a Knight of Grace of the Order of St. John.

His popularity was legendary. His funeral service, in Christ Church Cathedral, was thronged with citizens from every walk of life who somehow felt that in the death of this simple and generous man they had lost a personal friend.

There was also a family service at St. James'. Mr. Woodward had worshipped there since boyhood, had intimately known its devoted priests,



Father H. G. F. Clinton, Canon Cooper, Father Harold Whitehead, Father David Somerville and had helped to finance its new building in 1936.

His son, C. N. Woodward, succeeded him. He had left school in 1943 to join the Army, had served as a wireless gunner with an Armoured Car Unit, the 12th Manitoba Dragoons, in England and Northwest Europe.

For ten years after the war he carefully and thoroughly prepared for his position, as a stock-boy, a manager and a buyer. He worked in the Merchandising Office, was Store Manager at Park Royal and New Westminster, Assistant General Manager in Vancouver. His short period of office as President has seen tremendous strides in the progress of the Woodward Stores.

The new President started his term with the biggest project in the history of the organization—Oakridge Shopping Centre.

In April 1955, the Canadian Pacific Railway announced that a 32-acre site on Cambie Street running from 41st to 45th was to be put up for sale.

The C.P.R. had received this land in 1886 in return for an agreement to bring the railway to Vancouver, instead of their original plan to terminate at Port Moody. These were part of 6400 acres so awarded (for \$1.00 an acre!) and extending from the Burrard waterfront to Langara golf links. Gradually the C.P.R. had cleared the downtown area moving further and further south until this part of the acreage came into its orbit. But now, in an era of



St. James Anglican Church, Gore Avenue and Cordova Street.





Oakridge Shopping Centre, opening Spring of 1959.

town planning, there was to be no haphazard development. Certain conditions were attached to the sale. The site must be used for a shopping centre, the entire project must be completed by the end of 1959, and the plans must be acceptable to the City Planning Committee. Oakridge was to be part of a Comprehensive Development District, the first of its kind in Vancouver.

This was a commercial venture of the utmost importance. Tenders were submitted by most of the leading retailers of Canada.

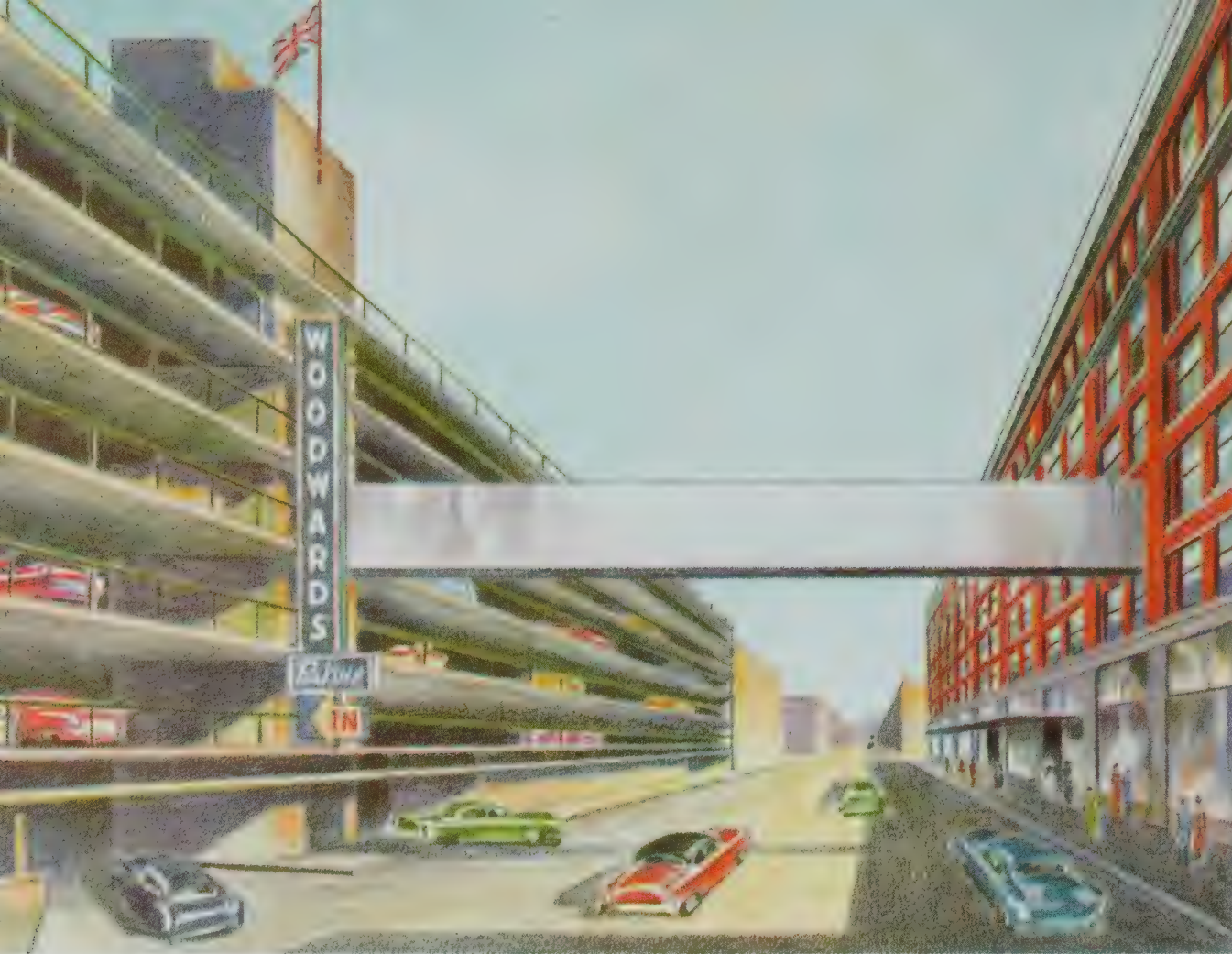
For Woodward's it was particularly vital. Already they served downtown Vancouver, the North Shore, and the eastern approaches. Expansion to the south was all that was needed in their development programme. A bid of \$2,108,750 was made; sketches, drawings, and plans were submitted. Woodward's was the successful bidder.

It was decided to run the Centre diagonally across the site and to surround it with parking space for 2500 cars and 3½ acres of formal gardens. At least 40 independent shops would be built along a landscaped mall 64 feet wide and canopied. A truck tunnel to keep all service traffic away from the parking area was also planned.

On July 31, 1957, C. N. Woodward turned the sod at the site of Woodward Stores Oakridge Shopping Centre, using the same \$1.49 Day shovel that his father had used for the New Westminster Store in 1953.

While Oakridge was still in the building a huge car parking garage, the largest in the British Commonwealth, was planned and constructed. It contains space for 900 cars, has a sky-walk entering the Store at the third floor, and offers free parking service for Woodward's customers. The land-





Woodward's new Self-Park Garage, 1957.

mark which had stood on Cordova Street for 27 years was pulled down and in its place came the most modern self-park garage in the City.

After Oakridge a shopping centre in Calgary is planned, and after that—well, time will reveal.

1957 was a year of modernization for the City. The streets were re-routed for one-way traffic. Details of civic management became so complex that a special Board of Administration was appointed by the City Fathers. While helicopters landed on the roof of the new Post Office, a 2200 foot tunnel was cut 40 ft. below Vancouver streets to bring in the mail from the C.P.R. station, and an endless conveyor belt was added, the first of its kind in the world.

The sinking of six tunnel sections each weighing 20,000 tons in the Fraser to make a four-lane highway under the south arm of the river, and to bring yet another entry route to the metropolis was also started.



"This tunnel and seven other major bridges", boasted the Premier of B.C., understandably proud of the achievement, "cost more and are larger in scope than all the crossings built in all the years since Confederation."

It was a year of modernization for the Store too. Arborite fixtures replaced oak. Fluorescent lighting units gave the floors a new brightness. The Food Department was re-vamped to give customers "one-stop shopping". New merchandising trends flowed in abundance in the wake of the new President.

Today British Columbia is 100 years old. When Charles Woodward came here in 1891 it comprised 98,000 people. Because of furs and gold, fish, minerals and timber; because of arable land and vast power resources; because of mighty rivers and towering mountains; because of man's courage and inventiveness, and God's lavishness, the 98,000 have multiplied 15 times in a few years, and the promise of the future is incalculable.

Today Vancouver is 75 years old. In that brief span the small town has become a metropolis, and Charlie Woodward's little shop has grown to a chain of Department Stores.

The City is in the prime of vigorous youth. Its continued development is certain.

We are sure, too, that the Store will march along with it. Woodward's has operated in B.C. for 67 years and has come a long way in that time. It enjoys loyal support from staff and customers. It will and must continue on the path of progress with British Columbia.





UPPER FALSE CREEK FLATS

WOODWARDS 1892

BURRARD

VANCOUVER





BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1892





17.